

From: Christopher Cassa <ccassa@gmail.com>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 05/27/2021 08:24 PM
Subject: Strong support for protected bike separation

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Dear Mr. Amstutz,

Thank you for all of your work on the process for Mass Ave/Appleton. I strongly support the work you are doing to make things safer for everyone here. I would love to see more protection including full protection for cyclists with bollards, and encouragement (bikes may use full lane signs), particularly toward the western end of the intersection.

Thank you for your consideration!

-Chris

--
Christopher Cassa

From: melinda fallon <mgfallon@gmail.com>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us
Cc: Kev Fallon <kevinjf@gmail.com>, kim@childrensroom.org
Date: 06/01/2021 03:04 PM
Subject: Proposed Changes around Mass Ave/Appleton St Intersection

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Dear Mr Amstutz

We are a busy small animal Clinic located at 1183 Mass Ave close to Appleton Street, Arlington.

We would like to submit comments to the Design Review Committee. Unfortunately we were not made aware of the Zoom meeting held on 5/27/21 ahead of time and so could not attend. We would appreciate any minutes or notes of this meeting which might be available.

While we are, in general, in support of appropriate safety improvements that could be made to this intersection, it was with dismay we learnt of a proposal to eliminate parking on both sides of Massachusetts Ave from the Appleton Street to Forest Street.

We strenuously object to this proposal.

As mentioned, we are a busy clinic and, like many, have implemented Covid 19 protocols since March of last year. These include curbside drop-offs, consultations, payments and sales of medications and special food diets. Frankly the protocols we have for the pandemic have been exhausting for our staff and clients. However we have managed to keep our staff, clients and pet patients as safe as possible. We service around 45 to 50 or more clients daily in this manner...the vast majority of whom bring their pets for our medical services by car. We stagger these visits as much as possible, but often have 3-4 cars of clients waiting outside on Mass Ave beside our clinic for the 5, 10 or 30 minute period we take to service them.

Many of our clients are elderly and/or handicapped. The handicap parking space in front of our building has been extremely useful for these clients. As clients bring their pets of varying sizes in and out of their cars, attempting to keep them safe from the Mass Ave traffic, it would be an enormous inconvenience for the owners to park some distance away (Forest St is not parkable near Mass Ave) as it would for our staff. It is simply not practical or safe for our staff and the animals to be walking longer (and it would of necessity be much longer) distances to and from clients' legally parked cars.

We have an average of 9 to 10 workers per day. They park behind our building in a small lot shared with two upstairs apartments tenants' cars. Double parking and parking each other in is a common occurrence. Due to the configuration of our premises, this is not an easily accessible or manoeuvrable lot, and it does not lend itself to any more cars or safe parking.

While we hope that our Covid protocols may be loosened in the future, the fact remains that we are a business that depends on convenience of access. The past year plus has been a struggle for many economically, and we are no exception. The loss of business which we would incur due to loss of accessibility, and the loss of any of the existing parking spaces, as we understand the proposal, would be devastating.

We hope to enter a fruitful discussion of the proposals with you before any decisions are implemented which would impact our business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kevin J. Fallon
Owner

--

Mill Brook Animal Clinic
1183 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
781-643-1500

From: Paul Raia <paulraiaphd@gmail.com>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 06/01/2021 11:38 PM
Subject: Appleton/Mass Ave

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Hello,

I am a member of the Disabilities Commission. I have two suggestions on your proposed design to improve the safety of the Appleton intersection of Mass Ave.

Remove two or three additional parking spaces before the pedestrian crossing signaled/announced light to allow cars to see pedestrians crossing and to allow oncoming cars to see pedestrians.
Equip the pedestrian crossing signal light with a beeping button so that the blind person can locate the button to request an announced signal to walk. Allow extra time for wheelchair users and the elderly to cross safely.

I hope this is helpful.

Paul Raia, Ph.D

Sent from my iPhone excuse typos

From: Deborah Nowell <debbie@nowellesq.com>
To: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Jenny Raitt <JRaitt@town.arlington.ma.us>, Ali Carter <ACarter@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 06/09/2021 11:40 AM
Subject: RE: changes to parking and street at the corner of Mass Ave and Appleton

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Thank you for your response. I will keep a lookout for upcoming meetings and I welcome the opportunity to participate in this dialogue. I have operated my business in this location for over 15 years. I was unaware of any discussion pertaining to the elimination parking, until my next door neighbor informed me last week. Safety is the most important matter but I believe there are a number of far less and effective solutions to the problem.

I am always worried about the Town making a decision that solves one problem but creates another problem. Should parking be eliminated in this block I will be forced to relocate and I am certain a number of the her tenants will be. There is minimal parking in the rear of these buildings but they are not for retail customers. When I moved to this location 15 years ago it was a far less vibrant block, which is not beneficial to the Town of its residents.

I would also expect that the Town would be very deliberate in approving additional projects for construction within this ½ mile strip that will generate additional congestion before discussing the elimination of parking spaces for a retail block that requires these spaces to operate.

I look forward to collaborating on this issue.

Deborah Nowell, Esq.
1193 Mass. Ave.
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 483 3880 ph.
Fx: (781) 483-3882
Debbie@Nowellesq.com

From: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 9, 2021 11:23 AM
To: Deborah Nowell <debbie@nowellesq.com>
Cc: Jenny Raitt <JRaitt@town.arlington.ma.us>; Ali Carter <ACarter@town.arlington.ma.us>
Subject: Re: changes to parking and street at the corner of Mass Ave and Appleton

Dear Deborah,

Thank you for your email. I have added you to my list of people interested in receiving updates about the committee and its meetings. May I share your email as a comment to the committee?

The committee has been deliberating and has reviewed several possible concepts for making short-term changes to the intersection of Mass Ave/Appleton Street and the adjacent intersections of Mass Ave/Lowell Street and Mass Ave/Forest/Burton Street. These committee meetings are open to the public and public comment is accommodated. No decisions have been made at this point and the concepts are likely to be revised further. Once the committee has endorsed a recommendation for short-term improvements it will still need to go before the Select Board for approval. Kim Cayer of the Children's Room is the business representative on the committee and has had conversations with several of the business owners and property owners in the block on Mass Ave between Appleton Place and Forest/Burton Street to understand parking needs and usage to inform the committee's decision-making. We will also be working with Ali Carter, the Economic Development Coordinator, as the committee continues to move towards a recommendation for the Select Board. More direct engagement with the business community is anticipated once a more final proposal is reached.

Please let me know if you have any further comments or questions.

Best,

Daniel Amstutz, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning & Community Development
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 316-3093
damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us

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From: Deborah Nowell <debbie@nowellesq.com>
To: "Damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us" <Damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Jenny Raitt <JRaitt@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: Mon, 7 Jun 2021 14:51:01 +0000
Subject: changes to parking and street at the corner of Mass Ave and Appleton

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Hi,

I am a renter at the retail space located at 1193 Mass Ave and a local real estate attorney. I am very interested in voicing my opinion in connection with any changes to the Street and Parking at the Mass Ave and Appleton Street intersection. I did not receive any notification of meetings discussing the proposed changes to the parking in this area. Please include me on the email list related to upcoming discussions as I would love to provide input into any proposed changes.

Also, I would like to suggest that the interests of the businesses in the block be considered in conjunction with the consideration of the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. While the safety of pedestrians and bikers is extremely important, the interests of the Town in having occupied retail and business spaces and the interests of the business owners in having a viable place to conduct their business must also be considered. If the parking is eliminated in this block I would not be able to operate my business in this space. In my opinion such a drastic change would be a huge burden to all the property owners and business owners in the area and is unnecessary because there are other less restrictive measures.

In addition, it seems very contradictory for the Town to approve a hotel and restaurant that will generate additional traffic and parking less than 30 yards from the area where the Town is proposing to eliminate parking. I will be sending a letter to the Town Manager to ensure that my position is considered.

I look forward to meeting you at the next meeting and with any luck it maybe in person.

Deborah Nowell, Esq.
1193 Mass. Ave.
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 483 3880 ph.
Fx: (781) 483-3882
Debbie@Nowellesq.com

From: Barbara McCauley <jbmccauley@comcast.net>
To: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 06/10/2021 08:08 AM
Subject: Re: Info re: bicycle safety and restricting on-street parking on Mass Ave

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Dear Dan,

Thank you for this thoughtful and very prompt reply! And thank you for asking permission to share my emails -- you may do so. I just assumed they would be shared.

I do need to first clarify some confusion -- you and I are not talking about the same parking lot. Yes, the one adjacent to our little Shaker-style condo complex, on the corner of Burton and Mass Ave, is all deeded parking; the lot is owned (and exclusively used by) the five families, including mine, who live in the 5 units in the two buildings. None of these parking spots are ever leased out.

The parking spaces I was referring to in my previous note are in a somewhat hidden lot behind the row of shops on Mass Ave; the space is visible only if you go thru the opening between the Sweeney & O'Connell real estate office and the animal clinic. Since there are nine businesses on the street and nine parking spots, when I heard someone on the board at the recent hearing say, "The owners of the businesses on Mass Ave park in that lot," I assumed they were referring to the spots there. But Deborah Nowell, the attorney on the block, tells me that those spots are all leased for overnight parking by individuals who have no connection to the businesses on the street; they live nearby in the community and need parking because none is attached to their homes or apartments. The owners of businesses on this block, Deborah tells me, have nowhere to park but on the street of this block.

It's good to hear that someone is designated to have conversations with business owners, but as I mentioned in my first note to you, it was clear that this plan was completely news to the three that I spoke with. I recently let the animal clinic directly across the street from me know, again, as they typically have at least 3 animal patients at a time in need of parking nearby, and when I went to get my hair cut at Amy's Salon last week, I asked if they knew. They said, yes, they had just heard about it from the animal clinic.

We continue to be very concerned about the potential economic impact of this plan on our community. Businesses are just now starting to recover from the financial losses of the pandemic and having no parking for clients and customers will add substantially to the challenge. And I wonder how the homeowners on Forest St. will feel when all the cars which can no longer be parked on our block are suddenly in front of their homes all day, every day.

It is interesting that you say more direct engagement with the business community is anticipated once a more final proposal is reached. I just retired from a 40 year career as a clinical social worker, and I would say that if you really want community input, the direct engagement should come long before any kind of proposal is reached. The high attendance at all the hearings re: the Lexington Hotel is testament to that. Neighbors want to be part of the planning process. Your immediate response to my email is a very good start.

Barbara McCauley
1184 Mass Ave
Arlington

On Jun 9, 2021, at 1:54 PM, Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:

Dear Barbara,

Thank you for your email. I have added you to my list of people interested in receiving updates about the committee and its meetings. May I share your email as a comment to the committee?

The committee has been deliberating and has reviewed several possible concepts for making short-term changes to the intersection of Mass Ave/Appleton Street and the adjacent intersections of Mass Ave/Lowell Street and Mass Ave/Forest/Burton Street. These committee meetings are open to the public and public comment is accommodated. No decisions have been made at this point and the concepts are likely to be revised further. Once the committee has endorsed a recommendation for short-term improvements it will still need to go before the Select Board for approval. Kim Cayer of the Children's Room is the business representative on the committee and has had conversations with several of the business owners and property owners in the block on Mass Ave between Appleton Place and Forest/Burton Street to understand parking needs and usage to inform the committee's decision-making. We will also be working with Ali Carter, the Economic Development Coordinator, as the committee continues to move towards a recommendation for the Select Board. More direct engagement with the business community is anticipated once a more final proposal is reached.

I appreciate your clarification that the parking lot off Burton Street that is behind 1184 Mass Ave and 3 Burton Street serves only residents of these properties.

Please let me know if you have any further comments or questions.

Daniel Amstutz, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning & Community Development
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 316-3093
damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us

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From: barbara <jbmccauley@comcast.net>
To: "damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us" <damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: Tue, 8 Jun 2021 19:28:41 -0400
Subject: Info re: bicycle safety and restricting on-street parking on Mass Ave

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Dear Mr. Amstutz,

My husband and I live at 1184 Mass Ave, in the condo complex on the corner of Burton and Mass. Ave. I am writing about the proposal which will restrict on-street parking for businesses on our block.

At the 5-27 meeting of the committee, I believe I heard someone (possibly you) say that the business owners on the block "all have parking in that lot behind the building". Since then I met with Deborah Nowell, the attorney who has an office on this block. She says that **none** of the owners of businesses on this block park there and their clients/customers do not either. She says that **all** of those spots are leased by residential tenants who live throughout the area. She adds that she would definitely have to move her office elsewhere if on-street parking is restricted, and that she is certain the owner of the Mosaic Supply store, whom she knows well, would have to relocate too. Last month I let the Ranch Roofing people know about the possibility of loss of on-street parking (there are periods during the day when 2-3 of their trucks are there, parked on both sides of the street) and they too indicated it was a complete surprise to them; I believe someone from their office attended the most recent board meeting as a result of my bringing this to their attention. I have not asked the Animal Clinic about the possible ramifications of losing parking, but I know, from living directly across the street from the clinic, that there are typically 3-4 cars parked on Mass Ave at any one time by clients with pets going into the clinic. Amy's Salon typically has two spots regularly in use by clients, and the yet-to-open Thai/Italian take-out place next to them will have no customers when they open, if there is no parking that allows customers to run in to pick up an order. And last, but absolutely not least, Dr. Machalinski dental practice is a specialty practice in endodontics. Patients come to her in pain, often acute; they are referred by their regular dentists for emergency services like root canals.

What I find very troubling, and the purpose of this note, is discovering that even after a year of meetings, major changes in parking/customer access are being considered without the knowledge and input of businesses and residents on our block. I will add that my husband is a 73 yr old serious cyclist, and I strongly support measures to make this intersection a safe one, but removing most or all on-street parking is not an acceptable solution.

Thank you.

Barbara McCauley

From: Darcy Devney <dcd.alist@gmail.com>
To: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Jillian Harvey <JHarvey@town.arlington.ma.us>, Christina Coleman <CColeman@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 06/24/2021 06:06 PM
Subject: Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee concepts

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Hi, Dan -

Thank you for asking, looks like at least the HP parking has been considered, which is really a good sign.

I'm very glad that the HP space in front of the Mill Brook Animal Clinic will remain, no matter what, there are no other HP options along that stretch at all.

I am less concerned with the single HP space on Appleton Place, because the church parking lot renovation years ago added *lots* of HP spaces in the back, and there is a level ramp along the side to inside the church. The single HP space on Appleton is located there because there is a direct, much shorter ramp to inside the church there.

I'm sure you've already thought about it, but the Hotel Lexington plans for just past that intersection should be looked at at the same time, because that will drastically change the amount of on-street parking and the driveways, etc. in that stretch. (If I remember correctly, the Hotel Lexington would eliminate all of the on-street parking in front, so it looks like one of your options would result in zero parking spaces (except 1 HP) from Forest to Lowell on that side.

Thanks,

- Darcy Devney

P.S. FYI, as a result of family medical crisis, I have resigned from the Commission on Disability and can no longer volunteer. I learned a lot from you, particularly in this last year, and wanted to say thank you for your hard work. Good to know you!

On 5/27/2021 10:39 AM, Daniel Amstutz wrote:

Hi Darcy -

I've been meaning to reach out to you regarding the work of the Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee. As you may know, we have a meeting this evening at 7 pm. Green International, the Town's traffic consultant, has developed new iterations of the concepts to address safety at the Mass Ave/Appleton intersection, which you can find here: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/27236/>

It was brought up at one of our meetings of the need for a disability perspective or review of what is being considered. We are still working through the concepts to get to a final, but I'd be happy to take comments from the Disability

Commission should they have any. Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Daniel Amstutz, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning & Community Development
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 316-3093
damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us

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From: Joy Ahearn <joyahearn@gmail.com>
To: Daniel Amstutz <damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 07/06/2021 01:08 PM
Subject: Mass Ave/Appleton design review

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Hello Daniel,
I heard about the Thursday evening meeting from one of my neighbors. I plan to attend via Zoom.

I am an avid recreational cyclist, and my general routine is to meet my friends at Starbucks in Arlington Heights three times a week for a 50-mile ride out west somewhere.

On my way home, I pop out of the bike path at the Old Scwamb Mill and go through this intersection, the same way Proctor did the day he died in May 2020. I sometimes take a sharp right on Appleton from Mass Ave, then left on Acton, sometimes take the soft right and ride by the church parking lot. I am always hyper-aware and cautious as I approach, and find that I'm more fearful of people driving down Appleton toward Mass Ave because they sort of roll into the middle of the intersection instead of stopping at the stop sign.

I live on Benjamin Road right next to the Ottoson. I am a huge advocate of fixing this very dangerous intersection. I don't feel safe driving there, and especially don't feel safe biking through there.

Thanks much,
Joy Ahearn
Cell: 617-460-3118